



MOVIE SCENE

Anne Wedgeworth as Patsy's mum. Fans of Patsy will be pleased to know that her original recordings are used on the soundtrack while Jessica does the miming, and very good she is!



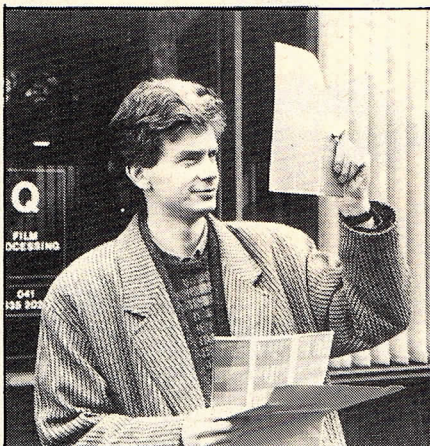
WHITE NIGHTS

This Year's 'Royal Film' — a strange choice I might add — teams dancer-actor Mikhail Baryshnikov with dancer-actor Gregory Hines in a movie set in Russia, and concerning a couple of defectors, one from the East to the West, the other from the West to the East who find they need each other's help to escape from an extraordinary situation in which they find themselves. Baryshnikov plays the famous Russian dancer who defected, only to find himself back on Russian soil eight years later — his London to Tokyo flight being forced into an emergency landing at a Russian military air base in Siberia. Gregory Hines is the black tap-dancing American Vietnam

veteran who had elected to live in Russia as a moral protest against America's involvement in that particular war. The two dancers are destined to be caught up in the dilemmas and dramas which are to follow.

THE GIRL IN THE PICTURE

Lightweight, competently-made, romantic comedy set in Glasgow and starring John Gordon-Sinclair (from *Gregory's Girl*) as Alan, a young photographer who can't make up his mind whether or not to break up his romance to girlfriend, Irina Brook. Meanwhile his buddy at the 'Smile Please Studios', Ken (played by David McKay) is constantly falling in love with the girls, who bring in their snapshots to be developed. There's one in particular for whom he develops a mad, uncontrollable crush. How Alan and Ken resolve their problems of the heart makes for some amusing and touch-



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ing moments. Written and directed by Carey Parker, and financed by both the National Film Finance Corporation and Rank Film Distributors.



MR LOVE

Barry Jackson stars as a municipal gardener determined to be some sort of Don Juan of Southport before he dies. After 28 years of a loveless marriage he sets out to find true love for the first time in his life. When he eventually dies, a dozen beautiful women turn up for his funeral. So, what happened? The answers are delightfully told in this modest British movie, directed by Roy Battersby, and also starring Maurice Denham, Christina Collier and Margaret Tyzack.

DAVID LEAN, I have heard, is now planning a new movie that takes him to South or Central America. Will keep you posted!

CASTAWAY, the on-off Nicolas Roeg film, is now definitely ON. Oliver Reed and Amanda Donohue top the billing and filming will be done in the Seychelles.

GEORGE HARRISON of HandMade Films felt the need to fly off to Hong Kong to sort out a few problems on *Shanghai Surprise* starring that volatile twosome, Sean Penn and wife Madonna. Sean had earlier fired the publicity man for doing his job, proving the point that Mr Penn hates publicity and being photographed. Goodness knows why! The company later returned to Shepper-

ton Studios where a 'protective wall' went up to shield the world's most publicised couple from the prying press.

UNITED BRITISH ARTISTS, who gave us the excellent *Turtle Diary* with Glenda Jackson (a member of the UBA board) and Ben Kingsley, are now making overtures to Marlon Brando for a future movie project. Quite a coup if he says 'yes'. He's been off the screen for quite a few years.

ARNOLD CRUST is credited as editor of Michael Winner's *Death Wish 3*. Yes, but you see Arnold Crust IS Michael Winner! Michael explained, "Arnold is the father of Venetia Crust, a debutante we invented when I was writing for a London evening newspaper back in the Fifties. We invent-

In Production
Out and About
with Ken Ferguson

ed her because she could say anything we chose her to say! It livened up the scene considerably! We named her father, Arnold. We all thought he had retired until he later re-appeared as a film editor! A wonderful editor. Charming fellow," smiled Michael who's now preparing to bring *Captain America* to the screen.

Desperately Seeking Madonna

By Colette Maude

Her name says it all. Madonna is a star idolised by millions of teenagers all over the world, and her records have sold in quantities to match. Her little girl voice and raunchy sexual image have fired the public imagination — with detractors saying that she has loose morals and her fans toasting her as the new Monroe. Now Madonna has turned her attentions to the pursuit of an acting career, claiming "I ultimately think my career as an actress will outlive all my other careers." Her first film was *Desperately Seeking Susan* (released by Rank Video) and amid much publicity, she has recently been in production with actor husband Sean Penn on the movie *Shanghai Surprise*.

"I've always wanted to act. I didn't plan that movies would be the last of the things I did. I've been in New York seven years, and when I left Michigan I had already been performing for four years. Maybe it seems like an overnight success to everyone else, but not for me." Certainly the phenomenal success of *Desperately Seeking Susan* can in large part be attributed to the superstar's film debut, and the makers further capitalised on their asset by incorporating Madonna's song 'Into the Groove' in the film's disco scene. Made for £4 million, the film has grossed well over that, taking £40 million in its first fortnight in America. Madonna earns big money, although the star herself bemoans this association which her name inspires. Talking about the Press, she claims that the obsession with money "explains everything down to the scientific thing — it takes all the magic out of Hollywood, and it's really upsetting to me."

With songs like 'Material Girl' to her credit, this admission may come of something of a surprise, but Madonna insists that humour plays a more important part in her life. Of her general attitude to life, she describes it as positive, and claims "I laugh at myself, I don't take myself completely seriously."

Such self effacement deflects from the sheer determination that has taken Madonna from her

modest roots to her present megastar status. She was born near Detroit, christened Madonna Louise Veronica Ciccone. Dad was a Chrysler engineer, a first generation Italian, and her French mother, after whom she was named, she describes as a "very forgiving, angelic person." She died of breast cancer when her daughter was six years old. "I think that made me grow up fast. I knew I could be either sad or weak and not in control or I could just take control and say it's going to get better." As a member of a large Catholic family she drew attention to herself by dancing on the table at family gatherings. Her interest in dance led to a spell of training before she turned her attentions to other branches of showbusiness. She made *A Certain Sacrifice* (1979), a low budget soft-porn picture and joined a band called The Breakfast Club. Nude modelling and a stint in Paris working with Patrick Hernandez are also part of the varied Madonna past. Her first solo album was a success, and the rest is modern history.

OUTRAGEOUS

Director of *Desperately Seeking Susan*, Susan Seidelman, saw acting potential in the outrageous performer, declaring, "I like working with people who are interesting as people rather than as actors. More rubs off on their characters."

Madonna was able to relate to her free-spirited fictional role, saying, "All the alienation I've ever felt I was able to use with Susan. There are times when Susan is frustrated and lonely, but she doesn't want to let it get her down. She keeps her head. I wish I could be more like that. I let things bother me." The movie is something of a magical adventure, with a bored housewife (Rosanna Arquette) able to transform her identity courtesy of amnesia, and the elusive Susan is a pivot for the dangerous and wacky workings of the plot. Stolen Egyptian earrings and murderous thugs are just some of the obstacles which the movie's heroines must overcome before they

find love and friendship. As the movie's publicity declared: 'It's a life so outrageous it take two women to live it.'

In reality, Madonna's raunchy image has been recently tempered by her marriage to Sean Penn, one of America's new breed of actors. She can now claim "I feel calmer now than I ever have before. It's funny, now that I'm in love, all the songs I write I feel like I do it all for him. I do it for myself, but I do it for him. So love inspires me, and Sean inspires me, and a great book will inspire me, or a great movie." Madonna shuns the unwelcome publicity which has become an intrinsic part of her life. The constant object of photographers' attention, she claims "It's not the taking of the pictures that bothers me, it's the element of surprise I always encounter every time they jump out of bushes or jump from behind a corner. It's like a teeny heart attack every time it happens."

Adverse relationships with the Press have been a feature in the filming of Madonna's latest movie — *Shanghai Surprise*. The film marks the first time Mr. and Mrs. Penn have acted together, in this adventure love story set in 1930s Shanghai. Madonna plays an American missionary, and Sean Penn a brash tie salesman. Both are in search of opium — in the missionary's case to ease the suffering of wounded soldiers in the Sino-Japanese war; in the salesman's case to secure passage back to the USA. Sean Penn fired the film's publicity officer and during filming in London, the couple were less than pleased by the attentions of certain reporters and photographers. There's no doubting Madonna's popularity — a March press conference to publicise the film resulted in a splash of front page news for the tabloids.

Her following inspires more positive thoughts. With the success and scandal of her movie career to date, it looks as though Madonna's acting ambitions will be realised. And the fans? "What they see more than anything is that I was a little girl from Michigan and I had a dream and I worked really hard and my dream came true."

Madonna as missionary in *Shanghai Surprise*

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